



Eluid Martinez, Commissioner
Carrie C. Kemper, Bureau Editor

Engineer Named BOR’s
Dam Safety Officer



John Smart is the new Independent Dam Safety Officer for the Bureau of Reclamation.

John D. Smart has been hired as an Independent Dam Safety Officer responsible for providing permanent, independent reporting regarding Reclamation’s dam safety program.

“By establishing this new position, we can better ensure a continuous, dynamic process to examine Reclamation’s dam

safety guidelines and practices, plus update our procedures to keep pace with technological advancements and management,” **Commissioner Eluid Martinez** said.

“John’s experience and expertise will also ensure that our program continues to maintain high safety standards and regulations for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance, as well as the emergency preparedness of Reclamation and Department of the Interior dams.”

The Independent Dam Safety Officer position was established as a result of a comprehensive, independent study of Reclamation’s dam safety program conducted by the Association of State Dam Safety Officials. The report, the first outside review of Reclamation’s program in two decades, found that Reclamation has “an effective dam safety program” overseen by “highly competent [staff] using state-of-the art technical standards and expertise.”

As Independent Dam Safety Officer, Smart will be responsible for the review and approval of dam safety programs for the whole agency. He will report directly to the Commissioner of Reclamation.

National Honor for Bureau
Engineer

Denver Hydraulic Engineer **Timothy J. Randle**, recently named Reclamation’s Engineer of the Year, has also been named one of the top ten federal engineers of the year by the National Society of Professional Engineers. A highly competitive honor, the winner must demonstrate superior accomplishments in both the professional and personal aspects of their lives.



Randle

Randle is a member of the National Society of Professional Engineers, the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the U.S. Committee on Large Dams. A registered professional engineer in the State of Colorado, he is presently working part-time on a Master’s Degree in Civil Engineering at the University of Colorado at Denver.

The Job Corps
Changed
Her Life

Northwest Job Corps Student
2nd in National Essay Contest

Amber Steele, a student at the Reclamation-managed Marsing Job Corps Center, won second place in the national essay contest jointly sponsored by the Job Corps and the Joint Action in Community Service. The theme for this year’s contest was *How Job Corps Changed My Life*.

Steele, of Pocatello, Idaho, completed her business and advanced computer training at the Marsing Job Corps Center. The second place award earned her \$500. Her entry was among 1,500 essays entered into the competition from more than 100 Job Corps Centers. (The essay is reprinted below.) Steele has recently moved on to attend the Tongue Point Job Corps Center in Astoria, Oregon, where she hopes to enroll in college.

Second place National Essay Contest
winner Amber Steele. Photo courtesy
of Marsing Job Corps



The Marsing Job Corps Center is one of three centers managed by Reclamation’s Pacific Northwest Region. The others include Fort Simcoe Job Corps Center in White Swan, Washington, and Columbia Basin Job Corps Center in Moses Lake, Washington.

My Reality: Then and Now

Amber Steele

Imagine yourself standing next to a phone booth in the pouring rain wondering what you’re going to do with your life. You’re in a small town far away from what you used to call home.

It’s freezing cold, but you don’t care, the only thing you want is a decent meal and a place to stay the night. You begin to realize the full extent of your situation and it scares you.

After a while you start to think about all the things you should’ve done differently in your life. You ponder these thoughts for a while and try to come up with a solution to get yourself out of this place. Finally, you decide to pick up the phone and call somewhere.

This scenario is more than just imagination, it was my reality. When I picked up the phone, I placed a call to Job Corps. I remembered that an old friend of mine enrolled at a Job Corps Center. She said it changed her whole life, and the moment I decided to call Job Corps, the only thing on my mind was changing my life.

After the cold, rainy night I moved back to my hometown, where I could have a place to live until I entered Job Corps. My daily routine consisted of partying from morning until night. My life was slipping out of my control and I didn’t know what to do about it, the only thing I could think of was turning my life around; I just needed a shove in the right direction.

I arrived at Job Corps on September 12, 1995, and I didn’t have a clue what Job Corps was all about! I had to live in a dorm where I didn’t get privacy. I had to conform to rules, and I had to quit smoking pot. I obeyed all the regulations, without haste. After all, I had a purpose in life, to get a life.

During my stay at Job Corps my attitude changed enormously. Job Corps taught me about myself and the things I could do with my life. It taught me to keep my head up when things got rough. I got involved in many activities on center, ranging

from the leadership program to various committees on center.

I learned that there is more to life than getting high. I met a lot of special people, and it amazed me at how caring the staff members could be. Every day I thought to myself, “Is this real?”

Before I came to Job Corps I had nothing. In exchange for my time and commitment, I was provided with shelter, food, clothing, and medical care. These were some major things that I was lacking, until I came to Job Corps. It seemed that Job Corps was making me a better, more productive person.

I talked to my family and kept them up to date with my progress. Finally, after six months I went back home and visited my family. In a way I suppose I really dreaded visiting them because we used to fight constantly. Even though I was very nervous, I went home hoping that things would change. I wanted them to see how much I had changed, to prove to myself that everything happening to me was real.

The moment I walked in the door of where I used to live, my family was astonished at how much I had changed. In that brief instant I was the happiest person alive. I realized that my life was now on a one way track, but it was the right tack.

It was wonderful to get compliments from my family about my attitude, appearance, and the skills I had been taught at Job Corps. They were so ecstatic that I won’t do drugs anymore, and that I received my GED and High School Equivalency. I am so very thankful for everything that I learned at Job Corps.

I have now been at Job Corps for 14 months and it has changed my life tremendously. I am getting ready to graduate and transfer to another center for the college program that Job Corps offers.

When I look back on that cold, rainy night I do not regret the choice I made to enter Job Corps. I came, I did, I am now a success.

Bureau of Land Management



Sylvia Baca, Interim Director
Jeff Krauss, Acting Bureau Editor

Left to Right: Bill Calkins, BLM
NM State Director, and Walter
Bradley, NM Lt. Governor



Baca Testifies on Budget

Tom Gorey, Washington, D.C. Office

The BLM’s \$1.1 billion budget request for 1998 seeks to promote the health of the public lands while advancing President Clinton’s efforts to balance the budget, BLM **Interim Director Sylvia Baca** has told Congress.

In testimony before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies, Baca noted that the bureau’s proposed fiscal year 1998 operating budget, excluding \$50 million in emergency contingency funding for wildland fire, represents a \$31.9 million increase over the BLM’s 1997 level.

Baca told the subcommittee that the bureau is among the top revenue-generating federal agencies, noting that the BLM’s management of the public lands will generate \$1.3 billion in 1998, an amount that will exceed its annual appropriation from Congress.

The revenues generated by BLM-managed lands come from such sources as mineral leasing, sales of materials and lands, timber and forest product sales, recreational user fees, and grazing fees. Some of these revenues will be shared with state and local governments, some will go to the U.S. Treasury, and others will be used by the BLM to support its program operations. Baca noted the following items in her March 11 testimony:

\$6.4 million to manage the recently designated **Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument** in southern Utah, which includes a \$5 million increase. The money would be mainly used to prepare a management plan that will identify, assess, interpret and ensure protection of the monument’s scientific, historical, and economic values. The funds will also be improve visitor services.

\$43.7 million for continued implementation of the **President’s Forest Plan**. This money, an increase of \$1.1 million over the 1997 funding level, will, among other things, enable the BLM to complete most watershed analyses on BLM-managed forests in the Pacific Northwest. Baca said the funding will allow the bureau to meet the full-harvest level of 213.5 million board feet of timber that is called for in the Plan.

\$5 million increase to meet the growing demand for **outdoor recreational** opportunities on public lands. The BLM expects to handle **76 million recreational visitor days** to the public lands in 1998, an increase of 1.5 million visitor days over 1997. **\$8.8 million reduction** on its **Automated Land and Mineral Records System**. This planned reduction results from the project reaching major milestones.

BLM, New Mexico Sign Historic Pact

Rem Hawes, New Mexico State Office

Bill Calkins, the state director for BLM activities in New Mexico, and **Lieutenant Governor Walter Bradley** signed a first-of-its-kind Memorandum of Understanding to work together on standards and guidelines to improve the health of public lands in New Mexico.

New Mexico’s Resource Advisory Council recommended public land health standards and livestock grazing guidelines to the BLM in October 1996. The bureau now is taking the recommendations forward as a statewide environmental impact statement, or EIS.

“The standards and guidelines are being developed by the people of New Mexico for the people and public land in New Mexico,” Calkins said, “and the BLM intends to work with all the interested partners in the state to develop the EIS. There are laws and processes to foster public involvement in the management of public lands, but I believe that through this agreement we are going much further toward meaningful involvement—we are involving

people at the beginning of the process rather than just at the end,” Calkins said.

“Traditionally, federal agencies alone develop EISs, which are required by federal law, said Lt. Governor Bradley, “but this agreement represents an innovative way to involve New Mexico citizens at the state and local level.”

The April 2 pact establishes the State of New Mexico as a joint lead agency, making BLM and the state lead partners in the development of the EIS, which will pave the way for nine counties and the Navajo Nation to become cooperating agencies (that is, associate partners) in the development of the EIS. The counties and the Navajo Nation will provide specialized and local information for the EIS.

“There are five tribes in addition to the Navajo which have major public rangeland interests, and we invited each of them to be EIS team members. Three of them have agreed to participate in some way,” Bradley said.

Silver Smokey for BLM’s Mullaney

In Montana/Dakotas BLM, when you think of fire prevention, you think of **Pat Mullaney**. His work with the regional fire prevention program gained national attention recently when he received the prestigious Silver Smokey award for his efforts in Montana and Northern Idaho.

“Pat is the driving force for prevention in this region,” said **Pat Durland**, National Fire Prevention coordinator at the National Interagency Fire Center.

Over the last several years, Mullaney, a BLM fire management specialist at the Billings Dispatch Center, has worked closely with the Bureau of Indian Affairs on the School Program. This ongoing outreach effort targets Billings-area schools. He organizes visits to elementary schools to present slide shows and demonstrations. Wide-eyed children are entranced when Smokey Bear (A.K.A. Pat Mullaney) shows up to



Pat Mullaney

further emphasize the fire safety and prevention message.

Mullaney has also organized numerous fire prevention programs to correspond with public events, such as Billings Mustangs Baseball games and the Northern International Livestock Exposition. He is currently working to develop additional prevention programs with the Forest Service.

The Silver Smokey is one of several national Smokey awards presented annually to recognize at least two years of “sustained outstanding service to fire prevention.” Gold, Silver, and Bronze Smokeys are presented for fire prevention efforts at the national, regional, and local levels. No more than five Silver Smokeys are awarded each year. Mullaney received his award on March 27. The Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Committee, with members from the National Association of State Foresters, Forest Service, and the Advertising Council, selects award recipients.

Cooking up an Earth Day Feast

Sheri Bell

Warm sunshine was the order of the day. Add hundreds of bright-eyed children. Throw in a few BLMers—the likes of **Sylvia Baca** interim director, **Bob Abbey**, acting state director, **Roger Whatley**, director of the National Information Resources Management Center, **Gayle Gordon**, assistant director for IRM, and **Lee Barkow**, director of the National Applied Resource Sciences Center.

Bring along lots of helpers from BLM offices...teachers and faculty to supervise, and include the superintendent of schools. Don’t miss the students pulling the red wagon loaded with punch and cookies for the tree planters. Ooops! We gave it away! Trees and shrubs—lots of them to adorn a school campus in need of landscaping.

Pepper the day with adults sharing stories of tree planting experiences from their youth. And you’ve got it—

everything you need to have a successful Earth Day Celebration at Edgewater Elementary School. BLM’s Colorado office adopted the Denver school in 1990 and has shared years of mentoring, tutoring, and rewarding learning experiences from the partnership.

Oh, and one more ingredient. Director Baca presented Principal **Lynn Osheim** BLM’s premier Partners in Education Award for the outstanding work her school does in environmental education.

Workers at this Earth Day event were rewarded with smiles, hugs, songs to the earth, and another trip down memory lane ala lunch in the cafeteria. Now, let the rest of those April showers come to water the new trees! Oh, no! It can’t be... SNOW in the forecast. That’s springtime in the Rockies for you.



Interim Director Sylvia Baca talks with students and faculty at Denver’s Edgewater Elementary School on Earth Day, 1997.



Points of Light Illuminate the Public Lands



The BLM Making a Difference award winners for 1997 are, from left, in the front row, Marty Felix, Ted Krein, Denise Wiengand, Marian Brown, and John Brown; in back row, Illa Willmore, Joan Fischer, Kathryn Mear, Tim Spitz, and Norman Spitz.

Imagine a job where you can help rescue a national monument, interpret historic sites, conduct environmental education programs, or ensure that adopted horses go to good homes. Now envision performing any one of these tasks, daily, without compensation.

That's what the BLM 1997 volunteer award recipients do. They provide invaluable assistance to the BLM in virtually every facet of its work, serving as "points of light" for the BLM.

The BLM presented its annual Making a Difference Awards to nine individuals and organizations for their contributions as volunteers in helping the BLM enhance and preserve America's public lands.

Interior **Deputy Secretary John Garamendi**, **Assistant Secretary Bob Armstrong**, and BLM Interim Director Sylvia Baca presented the awards during an April 15 ceremony at the Charles Sumner Museum in Washington, D.C.

The recipients were **Marty Felix** (Grand Junction, Colorado), **Ted Krein** (Albuquerque, New Mexico), **Kathryn Mear** (Lakeview, Oregon), **Norman and Tim Spitz** (Kanab, Utah), **Illa Willmore** (Roy, Montana), **Pompeys Pillar Interpretive Association** (Billings, Montana), **Red Rock Canyon Interpretive Association** (Las Vegas, Nevada), and **Trail Tenders** (Baker City, Oregon).

State Land Commissioners Meet with Interior Officials

Margaret M. Riek, Western States Office

Stretching public resources to enhance public land management was the theme. And a number of "hot button" issues were discussed, including the Endangered Species Act, land and water trust funds, land management transfers and exchanges, congressional and administrative action, submerged lands, offshore oil, federal land exchange programs, and media relations.

Top Interior officials met with state land commissioners and other state leaders at the recent Joint Spring Meeting of the Eastern Lands and Resources Council and Western States Land Commissioners Association. The Washington, D.C. session also discussed building successful relationships between land trusts and public agencies, protecting natural heritage values on public lands, the land and water conservation fund, and transboundary resource activities.

The annual meeting provides public land officials as well as those involved with land records and natural resources the

"The work done by volunteers not only enhances the opportunities Americans have to enjoy our public lands, but also ensures that our agency can preserve these lands as an invaluable, irreplaceable legacy for all future generations," Baca said.

The 1997 award winners are an eclectic group. Although their volunteer efforts vary from standing watch over historic sites to making sure that wild horses have enough food and water to survive, their contributions to the BLM are priceless.

Each year, more than 19,000 volunteers donate more than 1.2 million hours of their time—at an estimated value of more than \$13 million—to the BLM. Volunteers of all ages and backgrounds share their time and talents to assist the BLM in restoring riparian (streamside) areas, patrolling remote areas of historic and cultural significance, building trails, staffing visitors centers, conducting educational programs, and much more.

The BLM holds its Making a Difference National Awards ceremony each year during National Volunteers Week not only to celebrate the achievements of its award recipients, but also to acknowledge the contributions of all of its volunteers.

opportunity to work together to solve problems, make contacts with federal agencies, and share information. In addition to **Secretary Babbitt**, Interior representatives included **Bob Armstrong**, assistant secretary for Lands and Minerals, **John Rogers**, FWS acting director, **Carson W. (Pete) Culp, Jr.**, BLM's Eastern States director, and **Marilyn Johnston** and **Gary Bauer**, associate state directors. **Mike Dombeck**, chief of the U.S. Forest Service, headed that agency's representatives. Guest speakers included Interior and Agriculture department officials, congressional committee members and staff, state land office staff, other federal agencies, and business sector representatives.



Sylvia Baca

Sylvia Baca, interim BLM director, presented a plaque to **James H. Griggs**, the state lands director for the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The presentation commemorated the recent issue of the BLM's Alabama CD-ROM containing the General Land Office patent records for the state.

Fire Rehab Tests Volunteers

Nancy Adams, Nevada State Office

I had an opportunity to volunteer for the Minoletti Fire Bitterbrush Rehabilitation Project in Eureka, Nevada. What a great experience! The burn area was about seven miles from town, in the Diamond Range, accessible only by four-wheel drive. Snow melt, muddy tracks, and huge rocks posed a challenge getting to the site and back out.

Matt Spaulding from the Battle Mountain District was the project leader. He demonstrated how the bitterbrush seedlings were to be transplanted for optimum success. When they took root, the seedlings would begin to help hold the scorched earth, reduce erosion, and rejuvenate the soil. We carried a heavy metal hole digger, a bucket of water, fortified with vitamin B1 to hold about 50 seedlings, about 45 pounds of water in a backpack to fill the holes, and a spray bottle of chemical deterrent made of rotten eggs.

The plant roots could not dry out, (any exposure to oxygen would kill them), but at the same time, the leaves could not be wet or the chemical deterrent we sprayed on them to discourage the deer would not be effective.

The hole had to be deep enough for the roots to point downward. If they were bent or facing upward or exposed to air, they were doomed to die. The hole had to be refilled carefully to assure no air pockets were left to harm the plants. Once planted the bitterbrush had to be camouflaged to give the plant time to take root and begin to grow, about eight days.

This was no easy task. I expected an assembly line. Instead it was like nurturing children. It required a lot of time and patience, not to mention practice. We worked in teams, climbing hills through patches of snow, mud, and burned brush. We started out with layers of clothes, and as the day progressed and the work became sweatier, we left a trail of coats, sweatshirts, and hats on bushes.

In the distance on the rim of the hill, a herd of wild horses, seemingly curious about the activity, watched the volunteers as they planted the seedlings. It was good to know that feral horses do not eat bitterbrush, even under near starvation conditions. In the day and a half that I was there, eight of us planted 400 seedlings. Only 3,600 to go!

At right, Nancy Adams, a personnel assistant at the Nevada State Office, carefully digs a hole deep enough for a bitterbrush seedling during a volunteer project in the Diamond Range near Eureka, Nevada.



Special Olympic Honor

Ed Petersen, Montana's Special Olympic Athlete of the Year, will carry the Olympic torch during opening ceremonies at the state Special Olympics next month in Bozeman. Montana Attorney General **Joe Mazurek** will accompany Petersen during the ceremony. Ed also qualified to compete at the state games by winning gold and silver medals in swimming and bowling events at the Billings City Special Olympics held April 18. A mail clerk at the Montana State Office for nine years, Petersen has been a Special Olympian much of his life, and has competed in several different events. His selection as Special Athlete of the Year added another honor to his growing list of accomplishments. The BLM nominated him for the award.